

INFRASTRUCTURE AND REGULATORY ENVIRONMENT:

Building a Sure Foundation for Prosperity

Leaders at the Quebec City Summit stressed the critical role of infrastructure in achieving the economic integration of our hemisphere. Focusing on the sectors of telecommunications, transport, and energy, the Quebec City Plan of Action calls on governments to strengthen infrastructure through information sharing, trade liberalization, technological convergence, and regulatory reform.

Infrastructure facilitates the free flow of people, goods, services, and ideas. But for many countries in the Americas, infrastructure investments have lagged behind those in other world regions. To help reverse these trends, governments need to establish a sound regulatory environment and facilitate private-sector investment.



General view of the compound of bridges and viaducts between the Argentinean cities of Rosario and Victoria that opened last year to link the two streams of the Parana River. The project will facilitate trade between the Northeast of Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, and Uruguay. (Angel Amaya, EPA/EFE and AP/WWP)

The United States actively supports hemispheric efforts to develop effective regulatory and regional planning policies on infrastructure. In the aftermath of September 11, we have devoted particular attention to infrastructure security by providing security-related training, equipment, and technical assistance. We encourage regular consultations among public and private sector experts on infrastructure-related issues. And we promote compatibility across networks and help spur technological improvements. With U.S. leadership and the cooperation of partners, our hemisphere can build upon its geographic ties and increasing economic and cultural linkages to attain a world-class infrastructure.

U.S. ACTIONS TO IMPLEMENT THE HEMISPHERE'S AGENDA

- The U.S. is a leader in the **Western Hemisphere Transportation Initiative**, which provides a forum for addressing **transportation**-related issues such as safety, security, cooperation, and disaster preparedness and response.
- In cooperation with the Organization of American States (OAS), U.S. officials provide training in **port security** and assist countries with port security self-assessments.
- Through the Third Border Initiative, the U.S. is providing Caribbean countries with **airport security and aviation safety** training, fellowships, and on-the-ground direct technical assistance, with the goal of assuring that travelers in the Caribbean region enjoy the highest standards for safety and security.
- The U.S. is promoting the **development of new telecommunications technologies** in the hemisphere through the **Inter-American Telecommunication Commission (CITEL)**.